

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 INR-07 L-02 ACDA-05

NSAE-00 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00

SAJ-01 MC-02 EB-07 /051 W
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P R 071515Z FEB 75
FM USMISSION NATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9971
SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS 4968
USCINCEUR
SHAPE
USLOSACLANT
CINCLANT
USDOCOSOUTH
USDEL MBFR VIENNA

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 3 USNATO 0657

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MPOL, NATO,UK
SUBJECT: UK DEFENSE REVIEW: DPC DISCUSSION FEBRUARY 6

REF: A. USNATO 0520
B. USNATO 0574
C. USDELMC 101/75(DTG 031450Z FEB 75)
D. STATE 025780(EXDIS)
E. STATE 026620(EXDIS)

SUMMARY: DURING DPC DISCUSSION OF UK DEFENSE REVIEW FEBRUARY 6,
PERMREPS CONCURRED IN MC ASSESSMENT (REF B), SYMPATHIZED WITH UK
ECONOMIC PLIGHT (BUT WITH MOST MEMBERS REQUESTING UK RECONSIDERA-
TION OF AT LEAST PART OF FIRM UK RESOURCE DECISION), AND ADDED
POLICIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSION TO EXPRESSED MILITARY CONCERNS.
TONE OF MEETING WAS GENERALLY CONSTRUCTIVE. DPC RATIFIED MC
INVITATION FOR CONTINUING CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN UK AND MNC'S, AND
DIRECTED IS TO PRODUCE DPC COMMUNICATION TO UK FOR CONSIDERATION
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AT FURTHER MEETING FEBRUARY 10. END SUMMARY.

1. AT DPC MEETING FEBRUARY 6, ACTING CHAIRMAN PANSO OPENED
DISCUSSION BY STATING THAT UK DEFENSE REVIEW REDUCTIONS ARE

LARGEST AND MOST IMPORTANT WHICH DPC HAS EVER CONSIDERED; INVOLVING A KEY ALLY WHICH MAKES MAJOR FORCE CONTRIBUTIONS TO ALL THREE MNC'S. HE RECOUNTED HISTORY OF INTER-ALLIED CONSULTATIONS SO FAR (REF A) POINTING OUT THAT PROCESS OF CONSULTATION WILL NOT END WITH DPC, BECAUSE OF UNRESOLVED ASPECTS IN UK PLANS AND BECAUSE OF MILITARY COMMITTEE (MC) RECOMMENDATION FOR CONTINUED CONSULTATIONS. HE PROPOSED THAT DPC USE CURRENT MEETING FOR EXPRESSION OF INSTRUCTED NATIONAL VIEWS ON UK PLANS AND MC ASSESSMENT (REF B), ON THE BASIS OF WHICH HE WOULD PRODUCE A DRAFT COMMUNICATION FROM DPC TO UK GOVERNMENT, FOR DPC CONSIDERATION FEBRUARY 10. HE ALSO STATED NEED FOR PRESS GUIDANCE ON UK DEFENSE REVIEW CONSULTATIONS.

2. ADMIRAL SIR PETER HILL-NORTON (CMC) ECHOED PANSA VIEW OF BROAD SCOPE OF UK REDUCTION PLANS, STATING THAT UK'S HAD BEEN "QUITE THE MOST DIFFICULT REVIEW." HE SAID MC ASSESSMENT IDENTIFIED AREAS OF GREATEST MILITARY CONCERN, BUT HE HAD "NO DOUBT" THAT, EVEN RECOGNIZING UK PRIORITY TO NATO COMMITMENTS, LIMITED REMAINING RESOURCES WOULD RESULT IN "VERY SERIOUS DEGRADATION" OF ALLIED CAPABILITY. HE SAID HE PLANS TO ASK MNC'S TO PURSUE CONTINUED CONSULTATIONS "WITH URGENCY", BUT THAT IF SUCH CONSULTATIONS FAIL, ONLY ONE OF THREE RESULTS COULD ENSURE: OTHER ALLIED GOVERNMENTS MUST TAKE UP THE SLACK, THE UK MUST RECONSIDER ITS RESOURCE ALLOCATION OR ALLIES MUST FACE DAMAGE. HE SUPPORTED MC ASSESSMENT AS STRIKING THE RIGHT BALANCE BETWEEN UK VIEW (THAT ONE SHOULD NOT OVEREMPHASIZE EFFECT OF CUTS) AND VIEW OF OTHERS THAT UK PLANS PLACE NATO STRATEGIC CONCEPT IN QUESTION (BELGIUM-SEE REF C). FINALLY, HE EXPRESSED PERSONAL HOPE THAT THE UK WOULD "RETHINK" THE EXTENT OF ITS REDUCTIONS AND AGREE TO CONTINUING CONSULTATIONS WITH MNC'S.

3. PECK (UK) REPLIED THAT PROCESS OF CONSULTATIONS "WILL NOT END HERE." HE THEN DELIVERED INSTRUCTED STATEMENT (SEPTEL) REVIEWING ECONOMIC IMPERATIVES UNDERLYING DEFENSE REDUCTIONS, FACT THAT DOWNWARD ADJUSTMENTS WILL BRING UK DEFENSE EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENT OF GNP TOWARD NATO EUROPE AVERAGE, FIRMNESS OF UK DECISION TO REDUCE AND FIRMNESS ON SIZE OF REDUCTION, UK PRIORITY
SECRET

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ON NATO AREA AND MINIMUM EFFECT OF REDUCTIONS OF ALLIANCE CAPABILITIES, GIVEN RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS. HE STATED UK IS PREPARED TO CONSIDER ANY ALTERNATIVES WITHIN THESE RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS, BUT QUOTE MY MINISTERS WILL NOT BE VERY RECEPTIVE TO RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ALLIANCE WHICH, IN EFFECT, MERELY URGE THEM TO RECONSIDER THEIR DECISION ON THE LEVEL OF RESOURCES THAT BRITAIN CAN DEVOTE TO DEFENSE. END QUOTE.

4. CATALANO (ITALY) CITED DECEMBER 1974 DPC MINISTERIAL STATEMENT OF MOD FORLANI CALLING FOR REVISION OF PRIORITIES TO PREVENT DEPARTURE OF UK FLAG FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN. HE NOTED MC ASSESSMENT USE OF SUCH TERMS AS "VERY SERIOUS... GRAVE... SEVERE BLOW," IN REFERRING TO EFFECT OF UK PLANS

IN SOUTHERN REGION. HE TERMED MEDITERRANEAN POLITICAL
SITUATION "PARTICULARLY FLUID AND WORRISOME," AND EXPRESSED
SURPRISE THAT UK SHOULD GIVE "FIRST PRIORITY FOR REDUCTIONS
TO THE MEDITERRANEAN." HE PREDICTED THAT SOVIETS WOULD
INTERPRET UK WITHDRAWAL AS A WEAKENING OF NATO DETERRENT AND PUBLICS
SEE IT AS WARNING SIGN OF ALLIANCE DISCORD AND DECAY. HE
THEN "FORMALLY MOVED" THAT DPC AFFIRM CONTINUED UK MILITARY PRESENCE
IN MEDITERRANEAN AS "ESSENTIAL," WITH EXTENT OF PRESENCE
SUBJECT TO CONSULTATIONS, BUT TO INCLUDE AT LEAST NAVAL EXERCISE
PARTICIPATION. FINALLY, HE URGED MAINTENANCE OF UK CAPABILITY
TO REINFORCE THE SOUTHERN REGION AS "LOW-COST, NO-COST" MEASURE.

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SAJ-01 MC-02 EB-07 /051 W
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P R 071515Z FEB 75
FM USMISSION NATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9972
SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS 4969
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USNMR SHAPE
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CINCLANT
USDOCOSOUTH
USDEL MBFR VIENNA

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5. DE STAERCKE (BELGIUM) REMARKED THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO BE
"EITHER PLEASED OR SAD" WITH UK PLANS. HE STATED: "I MUST
STRIKE MY OWN BREAST FIRST," IN THAT UK FOLLOWS EXAMPLE OF
OTHERS, BUT THAT UK REDUCTIONS WOULD HAVE A "MOST STRIKING"
EFFECT ON PUBLIC OPINION, SINCE THEY CALLED THE STRATEGIC
CONCEPT AND DETERRENCE ITSELF INTO QUESTION. HE ASKED PECK IF
UK WOULD CONSIDER MC PRIORITIES FOR RESTORATION, AND ASKED
ADMIRAL SIR PETER HILL-NORTON IF SOUTHERN FLANK STILL EXISTS AND
WHETHER ONE CAN DEFEND IT. HE STRONGLY AGREED WITH CATALANO ON
DANGERS WHICH WILL FLOW FROM WITHDRAWAL OF UNION JACK FROM
MEDITERRANEAN, AND ASKED PERMREPS RHETORICALLY IF THEY WERE NOT
STRUCK BY POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF FACT THAT US WOULD BE ONLY
REMAINING ALLY ABLE TO BALANCE WP POWER IN THAT REGION. CMC
HILL-NORTON REPLIED THAT PLANNED UK WITHDRAWAL WOULD TAKE PLACE

OVER A PERIOD OF YEARS, THAT SOUTHERN FLANK STILL EXISTS AND MILITARY AUTHORITIES ARE CONFIDENT THEY CAN DEFEND IT AT THIS TIME.

6. AMBASSADOR BRUCE(US),DRAWING ON REFS D AND E, STATED US SECRET

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WAS PLEASED WITH UK PRIORITY ON CONTRIBUTION TO CENTER REGION, EASTERN ATLANTIC AND HOME ISLANDS. HE EXPRESSED CONCERN WITH DEGRADATION IN ALLIANCE CAPABILITIES FOR REINFORCEMENT, PROPOSING REDUCTION IN UK OVERHEAD COSTS AS AN ALTERNATIVE, AND SUGGESTED UK LESSEN IMPACT ON MEDITERRANEAN NAVAL AND AIR REDUCTIONS BY PUBLICLY ANNOUNCING INTENT TO MAKE PERIODIC SHIP AND TASK FORCE DEPLOYMENTS TO AREA, AND PARTICIPATE IN NAVAL EXERCISES. HE HOPED THAT UK WOULD ENSURE THAT DEFENSE EXPENDITURES ARE NOT CUT SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY ARE MORE EASILY CONTROLLABLE, HE SAID THAT US FOR ITS PART IS DETERMINED TO MAINTAIN REAL LEVEL OF DEFENSE SPENDING,BUT HE ALSO STRESSED THAT OUR ABILITY TO DO SO "IS BOUND TO BE INFLUENCED BY CONGRESSIONAL JUDGMENTS AS TO HOW WELL OUR ALLIES ARE MAINTAINING THEIR FORCE LEVELS." FINALLY, HE SUPPORTED MC RECOMMENDATION FOR CONTINUING UK-MNC CONSULTATIONS AND SUGGESTED UK AVOID CUTS PLANNED AT END OF COMING FIVE- YEAR PERIOD BY SAVINGS ACHIEVED THROUGH PARTICIPATION IN COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS,LOOKING TOWARD STANDARDIZATION OF WEAPONRY(SEE SEPTTEL.

7. BOSS(FRG) TOATLLY AGREED WITH MC ASSESSMENT. HE SAID FIRMNESS OF UK DECISION ON AMOUNT OF REDUCTIONS MAKES CONSTRUCTIVE CONSULTATION DIFFICULT, BUT URGED CONTINUED CONSULTATION. HE STATED UK REDUCTIONS INFLUENCE NORTHERN (BALTOP) AS WELL AS SOUTHERN REGION, AND THAT OVERALL EFFECT IS A "NOTICEABLE WEAKENING" OF ALLIED CAPABILITY TO DETER. HE TOOK ISSUE PERCENT OF N GNP AS YARDSTICK FOR MEASURING DEFENSE EFFORT, AND STATED THAT SINCE ONLY BASIS FOR DEFENSE REVIEW IS ECONOMIC ,HE LOOKS FOR REVISION OF UK PLANS "AS SOON AS THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IMPROVES.

8. CHARGE SELMER (NORWAY) EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT IN VIEW OF FIRM UK DECISION ON RESOURCES, CONSULTATION MIGHT DEVELOP INTO REGIONAL TUG-OF-WAR. HE SAID HIS AUTHORITIES STRESS INTERDEPENDENCE OF ALL THREE REGIONS, BUT DREW SPECIAL ATTENTION TO MC ASSESSMENTS' RECOMMENDATION FOR REVIEW OF ASW/MCM INATLANTIC/CHANNEL AND NORTHERN FLNK REINFORCEMENT CAPABILITIES. HE SAID UK REINFORCEMENT REDUCTIONS WOULD HAVE POLITICAL REPERCUSSIONS AND MIGHT RESULT IN WP MISCONCEPTION ON DEPTH OF NATO COMMITMENT. HE ASKED UK TO RECONSIDER REDUCTIONS IN LIGHT OF MC ASSESSMENT AND SECRET

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FIND SOLUTIONS BASED ON MC RESTORATION PRIORITIES.

9. MENZIES(CANADA) EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING FOR UK ECONOMIC PLIGHT, AND RECOGNIZED PRIORITY UK HAD GIVEN TO CENTRAL FRONT, BUT STATED CAREFUL STUDY OF UK PLANS HAD SHOWN THAT EFFECT OF CUTS IS WORSE THAN ON "FURST BLUSH." HE DECLINED TO SAY WHICH REDUCTIONS WERE WORST, BUT POINTED OUT CANADIAN AWARENESS OF IMPORTANCE OF UK CONTRIBUTION TO ACLANT/ACCHAN. HE RECOMMENDED CLOSEST ALLIED CONSULTATION OVER THE TEN YEARS OF THE REDUCTIONS,AND SUPPORTED AMBASSADOR BRUCES' POINTS ON INCREASED EFFICIENCY THROUGH ALLIED COOPERATION.

10. CHARGE BUWALDA (NETHERLANDS) STATED HE HAD BEEN FORCEFULLY REMINDED THAT "PEOPLE INGLASS SOUSES SHOULD NOT THROW STONES." HE EXPRESSED FULL SYMPATHY WITH UK ECONOMIC PLIGHT AND WELCOMED UK PRIORITY TO CENTER REGION. HE STATED, HOWEVER, THAT DEFENSE OF FRONT IS NOT POSSIBLE IF FLANKS ARE NEGLECTED,THAT SOUTHERN REGION WAS ALREADY WEAKENED, AND THAT UK REDUCTIONS WOULD HAVE MILITARY AND PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS ON ALLIED COHESION,SOLIDARITY AND RESOLVE, THUS WEAKENING THE DETERRENT. HE FEARED AMPHIBIOUS LIFT REDUCTIONS WOULD RESULT IN EVENTUALLOSS OF ASSULT CAPABILITY ON NORTHERN FLANK,AND ECHOED NORWEGIAN POINT OR REDUCTIONS IN ASW AND MCM (CABAPLITIEIES. HE NOTED NETHERLANDS HAD AMENDED ITS DEFENSE REDUCTIONS AS A RESULT OF ALLIED CONSULTATIONS AND FOUND CONSULTATION PROCESS "USEFUL." HE RECOGNIZED UK ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES, BUT SUGGESTED SERIOUS UK THOUGHT TO RECONSIDERATION ON RESOURCE.

11. SVART (DENMARK) EXPRESSED SYMPATHY WITH UK ECONOMIC SITUATION AND RECOGNIZED THAT UK DEFENSE EXPENDITURE, EVEN AT END OF TEN-YEAR PERIOD WOULD IMPLY A "VERY SIGNIFICANT BUDER." HE ECHOED FRG AND NORWAY CONCERN OVER LOSS OF 75 PERCENT OF NORTHERN FLANK REINFORCEMENT CAPABILITY, BUT NOTED UKMF DEPLOYMENT TO NORTHERN REGION WOULD STILL BE POSSIBLE. HE STATED THAT "OVER-CONCERN"- REGION SHOULD NOT LEAD TO AN UNTENABLE SITUATION ON THE FLANKS, AND HOPED UK WOULD TAKE MC ASSESSMENT INTO ACCOUNT IN FURTHER PLANNING.

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NSAE-00 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00

SAJ-01 MC-02 EB-07 /051 W
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P R 071515Z FEB 75
FM USMISSION NATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9973
SECDEF WASDC PRIORITY
INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS 4970
USCINCEUR
USNMR SHAPE
USLOSACLANT
CINCLANT
USDOCOSOUTH
USDEL MBFR VIENNA

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12 ERALP(TURKEY), SPEAKING UNINSTRUCTED, MADE VERY SHORT
STATMENT RATIFYING PREVIOUS EXPRESSIONS OF INDIVISIBILITY
OF ALLIANCE DEFENSE. HE STATED MC AND SACEUR JUDGMENTS
WERE OF GREAT CONCERN AND NOTED PROSPECT FOR CONTINUING
UK/MNC CONSULTATIONS. IN OBVIOUS REFERENCE TO US MILITARY
ASSISTANCE CUT-OFF, HE NOTED THAT "EVENTS OF THE LAST FEW
DAYS MAY ALTER SITUATION CONSIDERABLY", AND HOPED THAT THESE
EVENTS WOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.

13. PECK(UK) THEN THANKED PERMREPS FOR UNDERSTANDING AND
SYMPATHY WITH UK ECONOMIC SITUATION, WHILE REITERATING THAT UK
DECISION ON PLANNED LEVEL OF RESOURCES IS FIRM. IN ANSWER
TO DE STAERCKE'S QUESTION (PARA 5) ON MC PRIORITIES FOR
RESTORATION, PECK REPLIED THAT LONDON WOULD CONSIDER THESE
PRIORITIES WITHIN PLANNED RESOURCE CEILINGS. HE DEFENDED
UK USE OF PERCENT OF GNP AS A YARDSTICK, BECAUSE UK IS
TRYING TO MEASURE DEFENSE BURDEN ON RESOURCES. GNP IS
BEST BECAUSE IT QUOTE MEASURES DEFENCE AGAINST ALTERNATIVES
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END QUOTE. RESPONDING TO POINTS RAISED BY AMBASSADOR BRUCE,
PECK STATED THAT UK HAD ALREADY SERIOUSLY SCRUTINIZED
NATIONAL OVERHEAD, AND THAT UK WOULD DO MORE, INCLUDING
POSSIBLE REDUCTIONS WITHIN UK MOD. HE STATED THAT DEFENSE
IS NOT BEING CUT BECAUSE IT IS UNPOPULAR, AS SHOWN BY
PLANNED ANNUAL REAL DEFENSE INCREASE BY 1.6 PERCENT UP TO
1978/1979 AGAINST REAL ANNUAL TOTAL PUBLIC EXPENDITURE
INCREASES OF 1.4 PERCENT. PECK ASKED PERMREPS TO PLACE
REINFORCEMENT CAPABILITY REDUCTIONS IN PERSPECTIVE. UK
CONTRIBUTION TO AMF WILL BE FULLY DEPLOYABLE; UKMF EQUIPPED
IN 1968 FOR A WORLD-WIDE ROLE, WIL NOW BE FULLY EQUIPPED
FOR A NATO ROLE; SOUTHERN REGION CUT MOST BECAUSE OF EXPENSE
OF LOGISTICS IN MAINTAINING IT. HE PROMISED PERMREP
CATALANO THAT HE WOULD PUT IDEA OF SHIP VISITS TO MEDITERRANEAN

TO HIS GOVERNMENT.

14. ACTING CHAIRMAN PANSA THEY ATTEMPTED TO SUM UP MEETING. HE SAID PERMREPS HAD BY-AND-LARGE RESTATED CONCERNS OF MC, AND THAT SEVERAL AMBASSADORS HAD STATED REGIONAL CONCERNS. FURTHERMORE, SEVERAL HAD EXPRESSED HOPE THAT UK WOULD RECONSIDER RESOURCES DECISION, BASED ON MC PRIORITIES, AND VIRUTALLY ALL HAD FAVORED CONTINUED CONSULTATIONS. PANSA POINTED OUT TWO LIMITING FACTORS: UK INSISTENCE ON RESOURCE CEILING AS FIRM, AND CONFLICT IN VIEWS OF REGIONAL PRIORITIES. HE AGREED TO HAVE IS PREPARE A "DRAFT COMMUNICATION" FROM DPC TO UK GOVERNMENT BASED ON ALLIED STATEMENTS TO FEBRUARY 6 MEETING WHICH DPC CAN CONSIDER ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10. (MISSION WILL FORWARD DRAFT WHEN RECEIVED). IN ANSWER TO DESTAERCKE QUESTION, PANSA STATED THAT DPC HAD, IN EFFECT, APPROVED MC ASSESSMENT OF MILITARY IMPLICATONS.

15. PANSA THEN ASKED FOR PRESS GUIDANCE ON UK/NATO CONSULTATIONS. AFTER COLLOQUY WITH PECK AND BUWALDA (NETHERLANDS), DPC DECIDED THAT, IN ABSENCE OF COMPELLING REASON TO DO OTHERWISE, NATO INFORMATION SERVICE WOULD NOT REPEAT NOT TREAT UK DEFENSE REVIEW IN SUBSTANTIVE WAY UNTIL AFTER PUBLICATION OF UK DEFENSE WHITE PAPER IN MARCH. DPC WILL CONSIDER PRESS GUIDANCE AGAIN AT MEETING FEBRUARY 10.
BRUCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 18 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ellisoob
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975NATO00657
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: NATO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750286/abbrziba.tel
Line Count: 353
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: n/a
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 7
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. USNATO 0520 B. USNATO 0574 C. USDELMC 101/75(DTG 031450Z FEB 75) D. STATE 025780(EXDIS) E. STATE 026620(EXDIS)
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ellisoob
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 APR 2003 by MartinML>; APPROVED <15 SEP 2003 by ellisoob>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: UK DEFENSE REVIEW: DPC DISCUSSION FEBRUARY 6
TAGS: MPOL, NATO,UK
To: STATE
SECDEF INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS
USCINCEUR
SHAPE
USLOSACLANT

CINCLANT
USDOCOSOUTH
MBFR VIENNA

Type: TE

Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006